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SCIENCE

FRIDAY, JULY 30, 1909

THE MEDICAL SCHOOL AS PART OF THE
UNIVERSITY¹

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IN our educational systems, as in most of the complex institutions of human origin, the changes that are constantly occurring do not seem to follow a course of continuous symmetrical development. The manner of growth appears to resemble rather that process of exuviation with which we have been made familiar in the life history of the humble crab and his crustacean relatives. That is to say, at certain more or less regular periods our systems become enveloped in a case of customs and traditions of shelly consistency, which, while it serves as a protection toward dangers from without, afflicts grievously by and by the growing parts within. In the end the increasing pressure becomes distressing or painful and the only way out of the predicament is to moult the old shell and grow as fast as possible before a new one takes its place. The system of education in medicine has in fact been undergoing a moult for some years past and what I have in mind to-day is to call attention to the fact, perhaps already sufficiently obvious, that the process is not entirely completed. While certain parts of the system are free from the old constricting influences and are at liberty to grow and expand in proportion to the measure of vitality with which they are endowed, other parts are still encased in ancient shell which serves as an obstacle to their proper development.

During the last twenty years especially medical education and the condition of medicine in general in this country have been the subjects of much earnest discussion. Critics within and without the pro-

¹ Annual address in Medicine, Yale University.